

Love Amidst the Shadow

Chapter 13

I thought he was gone. I was confused, but I didn't question him. After I got into the car, instead of starting the engine, he rolled up the windows and turned to me with a cold face. "Found yourself a new man?" I didn't expect him to start that way. My emotions were stirred, and I was enraged. "That's some extensive care, President Penrose! I wonder if the previous women you slept with were as lucky as I am to receive your full attention." He suddenly grabbed my wrist as his face grew glum. "You slept with him, huh?" My face blanched. In that instant, all I could feel was the tingling pain in my heart. I shoved him away and replied, "Yeah, I did. He's much gentler than you, but I gotta thank you for the lessons these past few years. I could tell what position he wanted to switch to as soon as he lifted a finger, or raised his eyebrows." "Vivian!" The anger on his face couldn't be more obvious. His vexation filled the car, and I felt suffocated by it, thinking he was about to slap me. After a moment of silence, he blurted through gritted teeth, "Get out!" My breathing grew erratic. I got out of the car and slammed the door shut, all in one fell swoop, as I walked away without even turning back. Then, I hailed a cab and swiftly left. All those years being with him, I was constantly on edge and always gave him whatever he wanted without any resistance. But his words earlier today crushed me, and I couldn't take any more of them. Some time later, I got out of the cab and staggered into the hospital, and went to see my brother after getting my sprained ankle treated. For several nights, Mom hadn't been resting well thinking about Dad. And when I walked into the ward, I caught her napping on the chair. Adam, on the other hand, was playing with his phone. He quickly tucked it away under his blanket upon seeing me. He hastily explained, "I wasn't playing games, Vivian. I was just looking at the time." Before I could expose him, Mom heard the noise and woke up before stretching her aching neck. She looked at me and asked, "Vivi, has there been any news about your dad? Will Turing Corporation really let him go?" I walked to her and gave her a massage, assuring, "It's only been a few days, Mom. Relax. I'm sure Dad'll come out very soon." She heaved a sigh, unable to let go of her worries as she pulled my hand. "Why don't we go ask about it at the precinct?" She was highly concerned, and as I was about to comfort her, my phone rang. It was a call from an unregistered number. I picked it up and said, "Hello?" The caller answered, "Hello. This is the Western District Police Station. Are you a family member of Stephen Lovelace? You may come to the station and handle his release procedure tomorrow." I was stunned. Delighted, I hastily replied, "Yes, I am! Oh, um, thank you very much!" Ending the call, I turned to Mom. "What say we go take Dad home tomorrow, Mom?" She was dumbfounded. After regaining her senses, she grasped my hand. "He's good to go?" I nodded. At once, she tensely hugged me and cried out of joy. At the gates of the precinct, Dad—whom we hadn't seen for many days—was slowly escorted out from behind the metal bars. He seemed much older and his hair was whiter than before. Teared up, Mom sobbed like a child as she walked into Dad's arms. Dad helplessly patted her back. "I see the kids are here too." Mom sobbed, "Does it matter? You

startled me so bad! I thought..." She didn't finish the inappropriate part of her sentence. Now that Dad was fine, and Adam did pretty well with his treatment, the family was finally reunited. Thereupon, Mom suggested we go for a hearty meal to celebrate it. I discovered a restaurant with a quality ambience, and Dad, who spent half of his life saving money, hesitated when he knew about my restaurant selection. Adam sat for only a few minutes before he needed to take a number two, to which I showed him the direction to the restroom so he could go there. Worried, Mom got up and went along with him. After I made the order, Dad seemed to have something to say, so I asked, "Dad, what's wrong?" Having dithered for a while, he apologetically stated, "Vivi, I'm sorry for making you worry about me." "What are you saying, Dad?" I responded in a slightly louder tone. "I'm your daughter. Why are you talking to me like we're strangers?" As he remained seated, he uneasily claimed, "If I hadn't been that incompetent, I—" Before he could finish, he was interrupted by a reprimanding voice of a woman. "Are you blind, brat? Can't you see there's someone right in front of you?" I looked over to the source of the turmoil, only to see a woman clutching Adam's collar while Mom was crouching down to help a noblewoman up. It seemed like Adam had bumped into someone. Quickly, I sprung up from my seat and walked over to see what happened.